Extension of time for internet services

3583. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Telecom Regulatory Authority has extended off-break time for internet services by four hours;

(b) whether it is also a fact that VSNL has announced one slab under which 100 hours for internet facility would now be valid for a period of 12 months only since February, 2003, whereas the validity for 100 hours, before revision, was three years;

(c) if so, the reasons for slashing the validity period; and

(d) what steps are being taken by Government to revive the old time limit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) Sir, there is no off-break time for Internet services. However the Telecommunication Tariff (25th amendment) order notified by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) on 12.03.2003 provides that the duration of off-peak concessional charges for Internet dial-up access (Public Switched Telephone Network charges) which was earlier for 10.30 PM to 6 AM shall be from 8 PM to 8 AM.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. As per the information provided by VSNL, validity period has been modified by VSNL keeping in line with competitive environment.

(d) TRAI is mandated to decide the tariffs for all Telecom services, as per TRAI Act 1997 as amended by TRAI (Amendment) Act 2000. However, TRAI has not prescribed any validity period applicable for Internet prepaid packages. Internet Service Providers (ISPs) including VSNL are at liberty to specify or revise validity periods of such packages.

Rethinking on Spectrum Charges, Licence Fee and Revenue Sharing

3584. SHRIMATI SHABANA AZMI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are rethinking on the present structure relating to spectrum charges, licence fee and revenue sharing;

(b) if so, whether any decision has been taken in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) to what extent it would be helpful?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) No, Sir. The service licence fee and spectrum charges for cellular services, Basic services including WLL (Wireless in Local Loop) and VSAT (Very Small Aperture Terminal) are currently on revenue share.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

IT for rural areas

3585. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA :
DR. AKHILESH DAS :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether any plan has been worked out to extend benefits of the information technology to the rural areas of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken so far in pursuance thereof; and

(c) the progress, so far, made in promoting information technology benefits in the rural areas of Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and the Central aid given therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Department of Information Technology (DIT) through National Informatics Centre (NIC) provides NICNET backbone and e-governance support to both Central and State Governments and UT administrations. The Land Records Computerisation has been implemented in 2400 taluks in the country. NIC also provides necessary hardware at districts, application software in local languages and training to revenue officials, Government to Citizens (G2C) application packages in various States relating to Government Schemes, Government forms, grievances, etc., have also been developed in various